

# 2006

## I. Flag Football – The Game

### Rule Changes

1. There will be no kickoffs to start a game, to start the 2nd half, and/or after a safety.
2. Instead the ball will be placed on the home or away teams' 12 yard line to start the game and to start the 2nd half.
3. After a touchdown is scored, the offensive team may elect to try for 3 extra points (from the 20 yard line).

### A. Number of Players

The game will be played with 2 teams consisting of 7 players each. A minimum 5 of players need to be present to avoid a forfeit.

### B. Team Captains

1. Each team will designate to the referee a player who will act as the team captain.  
The captain is the ONLY member of the team who will speak to the officials.  
Captains will make all team decisions, including making choices on penalty situations.
2. Team captains shall participate in a coin toss to begin the game. The captain winning the toss shall have a choice of options for the first half or shall defer his/her option to the second half.  
The options are:
  - a. To choose whether his/her team will kick or receive.
  - b. To choose the goal his/her team will defend.\*The captain who does not possess the first choice of options for the first half will exercise the remaining option.

### C. Timing

1. Playing time will be 40 minutes total, broken into 2-halves which are 20 minutes each. Half-time will last 3-5 minutes.
2. During the regular season games may end in a tie.
3. During the first half and first 19 minutes of the second half, the clock will run continuously, stopping only for team time outs, player injury, and officials' time-outs.
4. Approximately 1 minute prior to the end of each half, the back judge (time keeper) will stop the clock and inform both captains of the 1-minute warning.
5. During the final 1 minute of the second half, the clock will stop for the following:

a. Incomplete Pass . . . . .	Starts on Snap
b. Out-of-Bounds . . . . .	Starts on Snap
c. Team Time-out . . . . .	Starts on Snap
d. Touchback. . . . .	Starts on Snap

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|---|---------------------------|
| e. Score . . . . .  | Starts on Snap(after PAT) |
| f. First Down . . . . .                                   | Depends on previous play  |
| g. Penalty . . . . .                                      | Depends on previous play  |
| h. Change of Possession . . . . .                         | Depends on previous play  |
| i. Referee's Time-out . . . . .                           | Referee's Discretion      |
| j. Ball touched on free kick and strikes ground . . . . . | Starts on Snap            |
5. Each team is awarded 2 time-outs per half. Unused time-outs in the first half DO NOT carry over to the second half. Time-outs will last 1 minute.
  6. The referee may declare a time-out for any situation not covered by the rules.
  7. The "Mercy Rule": if one team is ahead by 17 or more points at the 2 minute warning of the second half, the final 2 minute WILL NOT BE PLAYED. If a team goes ahead by 17 or more points within the 2 minute of the second half, the game will be stopped at that point.

#### **D. Equipment**

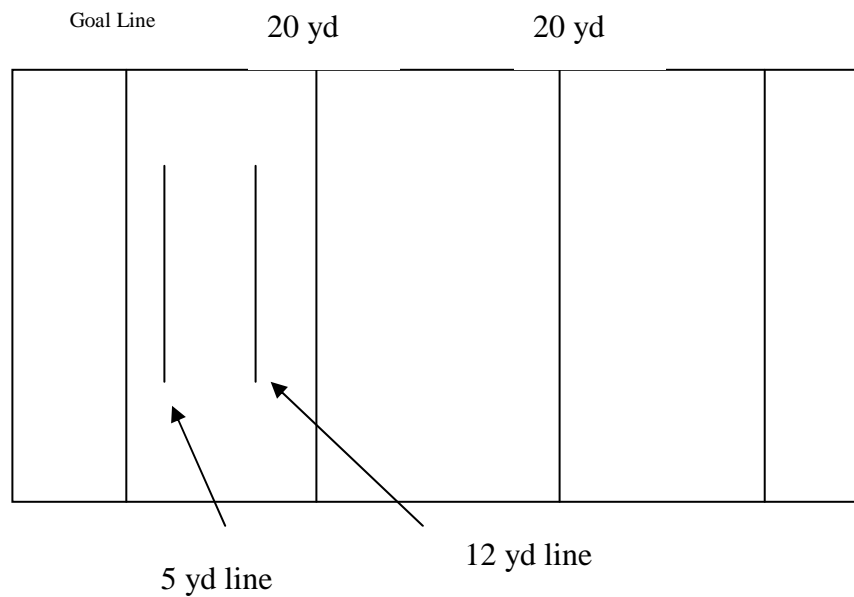
1. Each player must wear flag belts, which will be provided by the park and recreation department.
2. Teams will provide their own footballs.
3. Each team is strongly encouraged to wear shirts (or jerseys) of similar color, in order for the officials to more easily identify different teams. Jerseys must not hang below the waist of the player.
4. Players wearing illegal equipment will not be allowed to play. The following is a list of equipment that will be considered illegal:
  - a. Headgear except if it is a sweatband. NO BANDANAS!!
  - b. Jewelry of any kind.
  - c. Pads or braces worn above the waist
  - d. Shoes with metal, ceramic, screw-in, or detachable cleats.  
EXCEPTION: Screw-in cleats are allowed if the screw is part of the cleat.
  - e. Shirts or jerseys that do not remain tucked in.
  - f. Pants or shorts with any belt(s), belt loops, pockets (point of emphasis), or exposed drawstrings.
  - g. Leg or knee braces made of hard, unyielding materials.

#### **E. Player/Team Disqualification**

1. A player will be removed if he/she receives 2 unsportsmanlike conduct penalties in a game.
2. Players and fans are required to stand at least 1 yard behind the sidelines and between the 20 yard lines of the playing field. Players and/or fans that venture beyond the 20 yard lines will be given a warning to move, and further violation of this rule will warrant disqualification or removal from the game site.

## II. How Flag Football is played

### A. The Playing Field



1. A team has 4 downs to reach a zone line in order to receive a first down. Teams may pass, run, or punt the ball during these downs.
2. Teams must have at least 5 players to avoid a forfeit. Offensive teams must have at least 4 players on the line of scrimmage at the start of play.
3. There is no contact allowed in flag football. In order to end a down, a defensive player must remove the offensive player's flag belt. Teams must screen block (forcing the opposition to go around them but without making contact with the opposition).
4. Touchdowns are worth 6 points. After a touchdown is scored, the offensive team may elect to try for 1 extra point (from the 5 yard line) or 2 extra points (from the 12 yard line), and 3 extra points (from the 20 yard line).

5. After an extra point, the ball will be put in play on the scored upon team's 12 yard line. After a safety, ball will be put in play on the scoring team's 12 yard line.

### **III. Flag Football Definitions**

#### **A. Loose Ball Play**

A loose ball is a live ball not in player possession during...

1. A running play (i.e. a pitch).
2. A scrimmage or free kick before possession is gained, regained or the ball is dead.
3. The period of time after a legal forward pass is released, and before it becomes complete, incomplete, or intercepted.

#### **B. Batting**

Batting is intentionally striking or slapping the ball with the hand or arm.

#### **C. Fumble**

A fumble is a loss of player possession other than handing, passing, or kicking the ball.

#### **D. Muff**

A muff is an unsuccessful attempt to catch a ball, the ball being touched in the attempt.

#### **E. Catch**

A catch is an act of establishing player possession of a live ball in flight. A player must make contact with the ground inbounds with the ball, unless an opponent's contact causes him/her to first touch out-of-bounds.

1. If one foot first lands inbounds and the receiver has possession and control of the ball, it is a catch or interception.
2. A catch by any kneeling inbounds player is a completion or interception.

#### **F. Hurdling**

An attempt by a player to jump with one or both feet or knees over a player who is on his/her feet.

### **G. Protected Scrimmage Kick**

A kick that does not allow either team to advance beyond their scrimmage lines until the ball is kicked. A protected scrimmage kick **MUST** be a punt.

### **H. Forward and Backward Pass**

Forward and backward passes are determined by the initial direction of the ball. A backward pass that hits the ground is a fumble-it is dead at the spot that it hits.

### **I. Removing the Flag**

When a player's flag is removed from the flag during possession of the ball, the play is considered dead where the flag was removed. If a flag is inadvertently removed prior to possession of the ball, a one hand tag between the shoulders and knees is required to deem the runner down.

### **J. Contact**

In an attempt to remove the flag belt from a runner, a defensive player may contact the body and shoulders (incidental contact), but not the face, neck, or any part of the head of an opponent with their hands. A defensive player may not hold, push, or knock down the runner in an attempt to remove the flag belt or break up a pass.

## **IV. Flag Football -- Rules of the Game**

### **A. Delay of Game**

The ball must be put in play promptly and legally. The following are examples of delay of game...

1. Failure to snap or free kick within 25 seconds of the ready to play whistle.
2. Putting the ball in play before it is declared ready to play.
3. Deliberately advancing the ball after it has been declared dead.
4. Failure to kick the ball immediately after receiving the snap on a protected scrimmage kick.

**PENALTY: Delay of game, 5 yards from the spot of the snap.**

### **B. Substitutions**

No substitute may enter during a down. Between downs any number of eligible substitutes may replace players.

**PENALTY: Sub Infraction, 5 yards from the basic spot.**

### **C. Live Ball**

A dead ball, having been declared ready for play, becomes a live ball when it is snapped or kicked legally.

### **D. Dead Ball**

A ball is declared dead when:

1. It goes out-of-bounds.
2. Any part of the runner, other than a hand or foot, touches the ground.
3. A touchdown, touchback, safety or try for point is made.
4. A free kick or protected scrimmage kick comes to rest on the ground and no player attempts to secure it
5. A forward pass strikes the ground or is caught simultaneously by opposing players.
6. A backwards pass or fumble by a player touches the ground (a snap that hits the ground before reaching the intended receiver, is declared dead at the spot it hits the ground).
7. A forward pass is legally completed, or a loose ball is caught by a player on, above, or behind the opponent's goal line.
8. A runner has a flag belt removed legally by a defensive player.
9. A runner is legally tagged with one hand.
10. A passer is deflagged/tagged prior to releasing the ball.
11. A muff of a free or protected scrimmage kick strike the ground.
12. An official blows his/her whistle inadvertently during a down.

### **E. Inadvertent Whistles**

On occasion, an official may blow his/her whistle inadvertently, stopping play during a time when play should not normally be stopped. When an inadvertent whistle is sounded, the ball is declared dead, and the following options are available.

1. If a whistle is blown while a team has the ball, the team that has the ball may choose to put the ball in play at the spot of the whistle or replay the down.
2. If a whistle is blown when the ball is loose from a fumble, backward pass, illegal kick or illegal forward pass -- the team in possession may elect to put the ball in play where possession was lost or replay the down.
3. If a whistle is blown during a legal forward pass or a free or protected scrimmage kick -- the ball is replaced to the previous spot and the down is replayed.

If a foul occurs during any of the above downs, an accepted penalty shall be administered as in any other play situations. When the foul is accepted, disregard the inadvertent whistle.

## **F. Zone Line to Gain**

The zone line to gain in any series shall be the zone in advance of the ball, unless distance has been lost due to penalty. The most forward point of the ball, when declared dead shall be the determining factor.

## **G. Kicking the Ball**

### **1. Protected Scrimmage Kick (Punt)**

The offensive team must have at least 4 within one yard of their scrimmage line and remain motionless until the kick is made.

**PENALTY: Illegal Procedure, 5 yards from the previous spot**

The kicker must be at least 2 yards behind the scrimmage line when receiving the snap and must kick immediately and in a continuous motion.

**PENALTY: Delay of game, 5 yards from the previous spot.**

## **H. Snapping, Handing, and Passing the Ball**

### **1. Ball Responsibility**

The team in possession of the ball is responsible for retrieving the ball after a down. The officials are no longer responsible for placing the ball on the scrimmage line.

### **2. Encroachment**

No player on the defense may encroach, touch the ball, nor make contact with opponents or in any way interfere with them. This includes standing in the neutral zone.

**PENALTY: Encroachment, 5 yards from the previous spot**

### **3. False Start**

No offensive player shall make a false start. A false start includes simulating a charge or start of play (the offense may not move). This penalty is enforced whether the ball is snapped or not.

**PENALTY: Dead ball foul, illegal procedure, 5 yards from the previous spot.**

#### 4. Formation on the Line

The offensive team must have at least 4 players (*5 players for Co-Rec*) on their scrimmage line at the time of the snap. All players must be inbounds.

**PENALTY: Illegal Procedure, 5 yards from the previous spot.**

#### 5. Motion

An offensive player may be in motion ANY distance from the line of scrimmage provided he/she is not moving towards the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap.

**PENALTY: Illegal Motion, 5 yards from the previous spot.**

#### 6. Shift

Before the snap, offensive players who attempt to shift positions must come to a complete stop and remain stationary in legal position for at least 1 second prior to the snap.

**PENALTY: Illegal procedure, 5 yards from the previous spot**

#### 7. The Snap

The snap can be passed back to the receiver in any manner provided it is a continuous motion and starts from the ground.

**PENALTY: Dead Ball, illegal snap, 5 yards from the line of scrimmage**

### **I. Forward and Backward Passing**

**NOTE:** The initial direction of the pass determines if it is forwards or backwards.

#### 1. A Forward Pass is Illegal:

- a. If the passer crosses the line of scrimmage when the ball leaves his/her hand.
- b. If intentionally thrown to the ground or out-of-bounds to save loss of yardage.
- c. If there is more than one forward pass.

**PENALTY: Illegal forward pass, 5 yards from the spot of the foul and a loss of down**

**NOTE:** It is LEGAL for a player to run the ball over the line and then: (1) pass the ball backwards into the backfield and then throw a forward pass or (2) run the ball over the line of scrimmage and then retreat back behind the line and then throw a forward pass.

#### 2. Simultaneous Catch by Opposing Players



Simultaneous catches are declared dead balls and possession is awarded to the offense at the spot of the catch.

**J. Safety = 2 points**

It is a safety when:

1. A runner carries the ball from the field of play to or across his/her own goal line, and it becomes dead there in his/her team's possession. **EXCEPTION:** If a player's momentum carries him/her into the end zone and the ball is declared dead there, the possession is given to the player making catch at the spot where the pass was intercepted or the kick was caught.
2. An offensive player commits any foul for which the penalty is accepted and measurement is from a spot in his/her end zone

**NOTE:** When a safety is scored, the ball belongs to the defending team at its own 20 yard line and that team shall put the ball in play by a free kick by punting or place kicking it.

**K. Personal Fouls**

No player shall:

1. Punch, strike, steal or attempt to steal the ball from a player in possession.
2. Trip an opponent.
3. Contact an opponent who is on the ground.
4. Throw the runner to the ground.
5. Hurdle another player.
6. Contact an opponent either before or after the ball is declared dead.
7. Make any contact with an opponent deemed as unnecessarily rough outside the rules.
8. Deliberately drive or run into a defensive player.
9. Clip(contact from behind)an opponent.
10. Hold or tackle a runner.

**PENALTY: Personal Foul, 10 yards, from the end of the run.**

11. Rough the passer.

**PENALTY: Roughing passer, 10 yards from previous spot and an automatic first down.**

**L. Blocking/Rushing**

1. Offensive Screen Blocking

The offense may only block without creating any contact. The blocker acts as a screen to ward off defenders. Offensive players must have their hands at their sides or behind their backs when screen blocking.

**PENALTY: Personal foul, 10 yards from the previous spot.**

**NOTE :** If an illegal block occurs in the offensive backfield, the penalty is enforced from the SPOT of the foul(all but one principle)

2. Use of hands or arms by the defense

Defensive players must go around the offensive player's screen block. The arms and hands MAY NOT be used as a wedge to contact the opponent.

**M. Flag Guarding**

Runners may not guard the flag belt, either intentionally or unintentionally, to deny the opportunity for an opponent to pull or remove the flag belt. Flag guarding includes, but is not limited to:

1. Swinging the hands or arms over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from deflagging or placing the ball over the flag belt for the same purpose.
2. Lowering the shoulders, placing the arm over the flag belt.
3. Stiff arming an opponent.
4. Using the ball to protect the flags.

**PENALTY: Flag guarding, 10 yard penalty from the spot of the foul.**

**N. Overtime**

If at the end of the game there is a tie ball game. There will be an overtime period similar to college football.

1. A coin toss will take place. The winner of the coin toss shall choose one of the following options.
  - a. Offense or defense, with the offense at the opponent's 20 yard line to start the first series.
  - b. Which end of the field shall be used for both series of that overtime period.  
*Note:* The winner of the coin toss may not defer his choice.
  - c. The loser of the toss shall exercise the remaining option for the first extra period and shall have the first choice of the two options for subsequent even-numbered periods
2. The offense will have 4 plays to score.
3. The extra point system will be the same.
4. If the score is tied after the 1<sup>st</sup> overtime period

